

THE DAILY
SHORT STORY

A Wedding Special.

By LATIMER J. WILSON.

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THE wisp of pale smoke settled into diaphanous strata in the air of Orville's room, where he and Harold were sitting. It was near the end of a day busy with preparations for a peculiar expedition to a distant city. The village of Baneville was getting ready to escort Orville, as a prospective groom, and Harold, as prospective best man, to the distant old city of romance, New Orleans, where the bride-to-be resided. For eight long months her friends in Baneville had missed her from their dances, parties and social events, Orville had been twice to see her there, and now he was planning to take the whole town to bring her back. Through the cigarette fog a number of photographs could be seen on the table in the center of Orville's room.

"There they are—all of them!" he said, pointing the tip of his cigarette toward the pictures. "I suppose you know every girl I ever went with in this burg."

His friend looked casually toward the group. He had serious dark eyes and waving dark hair combed loosely back from a wide, intelligent brow. Orville was no less handsome, but he was blonde and slightly stout and his eyes were blue and less seriously expressive. "A cynic," he called him. "A good fellow," others said. His oval manner won friends easily.

"Look here," he said, taking up one of the photographs. "Jane's a trick all right. We thought a lot of each other one time. She was wild about me."

"If I were in your place, old chap," said Harold disapprovingly. "I'd quit boasting and put all those pictures away except one—the one."

"Ah! Moon of My Delight!" Orville exclaimed, holding up the large portrait of the bride-to-be. Harold did not lift his eyes from the point in space at which his gaze was thoughtfully fixed.

"Have on," was all he said. "There's the girl of girls! See here, old man; when it comes time to slip the little circle of gold, don't you forget which pocket it's in," laughed Orville. "But what do you think of our wedding party, anyway? Isn't it stunt to take the whole burg 800 miles to see you haltered for life? There'll be just two carloads of us; the Pullmans are reserved and the train'll be ready at 1 a. m., southward bound."

Harold looked keenly beneath his dark brows toward Orville.

"Don't you think it's rather nervy to take along all the ashes of your past romances to pave the way for wedded bliss?" he asked.

"Of course it's all right," said Orville unabashed. "Every girl in this burg will know within forty-eight hours what kind of a wedding can be pulled off in metropolitan style. There'll be nothing else to talk about for six generations to come. Leave it to me to do things right."

"You've got the bank account behind you," commented Harold, "and a life of apoplexy with a fine girl ahead," he added. Orville began to gather up the photographs, dumping them into an open drawer of his desk. For an instant one of the pictures lingered upon Orville's eyes fastened sharply upon it.

then he reached forward and took it up. "Say, old chap—that girl doesn't belong to your collection. I'm going to cop this," and he put the picture into his own pocket.

"Certainly you can have it," said Orville willingly. "You're right. She's only mine and Mabel's friend, and I guess she thinks more of you than ever she thought of me." Then he added, "What a stunning maid of honor she'll make! You and she will make a fine-looking pair."

A noisy fun-filled crowd of young men and women with elderly guests gathered at the town depot at midnight. They piled into the reserved Pullmans when the train arrived fifteen minutes late in Baseville. Sleeping passengers were aroused by the clamor. Throughout the next day smiling faces greeted the passage of the train bearing in large letters on two of its Pullmans the large sign "The Wedding Special."

Orville did not reserve much time to himself en route, generously sharing it with the originals of his photographic collection and others. But there came an interval when everybody was tired and when Orville found himself with his feet stretched across the arm of an empty seat in the smoking car. Darkness was framed outside the windows and smoky, dim-lit reflections were framed within. In memory of the past, refreshing Orville's memory of a cherished scene.

He remembered how the moonlight silvered gables and tretops, and how catches of it pale shone fell at his feet when he and Mabel sat on the front steps of her old home in Baneville. In the depths of her eyes he had seemed to see the response which the tobacco haze of the room came as he had craved no longer. But Mabel had always been more or less of a sphinx-like mystery to him. She then had surprised him by saying, "No, there is no one else. I like you as well as any one."

But he wanted far more than that from her. He had determined that if she would not promise him that night to be his wife the blame of failure would be his alone. He remembered how with the ardor of sudden impulse he had swept her bodily into his arms, holding her so firmly that she could not struggle.

"Oh, Orville! Don't—please don't," she had whispered while tears came into the corners of her eyes. But his arms were locked and he had thrown away the key.

"You must promise me now—to-night. It is our last night together. You must say that you will let me come for you and bring you back as my wife."

Under the spell of his arms and kisses she had promised. Her father and mother were pleased with the turn of affairs, and the engagement had been announced soon after Mabel had gone. That was eight months ago, and now—here he was almost at the journey's end. Soon Mabel would be a member of the wedding party traveling back to the drowsy little town where

he was so important. Financially and socially he could make his wife very proud.

His reminiscence was dispelled by the preparations nearing the end of the journey. New Orleans, that quaint old town, was beginning to glide past the windows. There would be a great time ahead for the jolly crowd in the Pullmans when they set about seeing the curiosities of the interesting city. Orville and the members of his family were to be the guests of the bride's father and mother. The others were booked for a hotel. When the train came to a full stop in the station and the party were assembling around the cars awaiting directions, Orville caught sight of his future father-in-law, a large man with gray side whiskers. He came forward with some embarrassment and taking Orville by the arm whispered, "We must not be overheard—come over to the waiting room a moment."

Orville called to his friends to wait until he returned. Then, in the corner of the busy room, he heard the news. "Mabel has greatly disappointed all of us," said her father in a much-broken voice. "Just two hours ago she left a note telling us that she had eloped with a certain young man who has been friendly since we came here. Neither her mother nor I had any idea how things were going. We would have let you know. It's too bad, but nothing can be done now about it."

Orville was stunned at first. He was too dazed to reply. Without a word he took his never-to-be father-in-law by the arm and piloted him back to the crowd.

"Stand here a moment," he said hoarsely. Then he took Harold aside. After a brief consultation, the latter whispered a few words to the maid of honor. She turned pale, then blushed and shook her head in slow approval. Orville stepped up in front of the attentive, silent crowd, and said in a voice loud enough for all to hear:

"Friends, wedding guests, Banevillers! A minor change has been made in our plans because of the whims of the lady chiefly concerned. My friend here," he said, touching Harold's arm, "will take my place as groom. And this charming lady," he added, taking the maid of honor by the hand and leading her toward Harold "is to be the bride. As for myself," he took out a cigarette and lit it. "Well, the joke's on me—and so is the blame if every one of you don't have the best time imaginable in this old town. Let's carry out all plans as originally intended, banquet and all, barring the change mentioned. Presto! Come now! On with the play!"

Murmur started in the crowd. There were whispers. "He's a good fellow, anyway," and all the originals of his photographic collection rallied around him with genuine delight.

One Form

"What is camouflage, pa?" "Staining your fingers with ink to make people think that you are a writer."—Detroit News.

EAST SIDE
-- NEWS --

At First M. P. Church.

The employees of the Mid-West Box factory attended the services at the First M. P. church last evening. There were some special musical numbers and the song service led by the large choir was most inspiring. Rev. Lawson preached an excellent discourse upon "The Deliverer." He was given the most earnest attention and there were several conversions. Tonight the men from the Owens factory will attend the service in a body. Seats will be reserved for them and the service will probably be the most interesting one yet held during these series of meetings.

Home From Baltimore.

Mrs. Willis Irons of Colfax who has been a surgical patient at Johns Hopkins hospital at Baltimore arrived home Thursday morning. Her husband went down and accompanied her home. Mrs. Irons is recovering nicely from her recent operation.

Aid Society.

The Aid Society of the Diamond street church. As the membership of the society is large the society was divided into four divisions and at the next meeting superintendents will be appointed for each division making the work less arduous for the president. There will be about fifty members in each division.

Teacher Ill.

Miss McConnell, a teacher in the East Side high school has been ill and unable for duties the past few days. Mrs. Clinton has charge of her classes during her absence.

Personal.

Mrs. E. C. Rowand and children spent Thursday at Grafton guests of Mrs. Holverstoff and family.

Mrs. Gregory and daughter, Mrs. Willison who have been guests of the former's son D. T. Gregory in Dia-

mond street returned to their home at Webster Springs today.

Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Carpenter have returned from a several days stay at Colfax.

Mrs. M. R. Merrifield who was a surgical patient at Cooks hospital has returned to her home in Wilson street. She is recovering from her operation rapidly.

Social.

The B. Y. P. U. of the Palatine Baptist church will give a good program at their social this evening which will be held in the social room of the church.

The Story Lady

Peter jumped up suddenly and ran to the bathroom, opened the medicine chest, took out a box and hurried back to Ruth, who was just finishing her map.

"See here, Ruth, here is your quinine all the capsules ready to paste on your map. And why couldn't you put the rest of the things in the empty capsules, too?"

"Why I believe I could," said Ruth. "Peter, you're a bright boy."

"So they took the capsules to the kitchen and had lots of fun filling them with all the different spices, pepper and cloves and cinnamon and nutmeg. Peter got pepper up his nose and sneezed so hard that mamma came

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to the kitchen to see what those children were up to.

They then visited the sugar jar and the flour and meal bin and the coffee can.

Ruth had drawn a very good map and when she and Peter had pasted the capsules in place and pasted a bit of cotton and a piece of jar rubber on it too, they both agreed that Ruth would win the dollar.

And she did, too!

And that wasn't all. She gave Peter half of it!

—Helen Carpenter Moore.

And Nothing But Questions.

"I'm never going to return a lost article to any one again," said a Kansas City man the other day.

"Why?" he asked.

"Well, this fellow advertised a reward for the return of his dog, and no questions asked. And then when I took the dog and went up and rang the bell his wife answered the door."

—Kansas City Star.

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Don't forget the world famous singers at the First Methodist Episcopal church, Monday evening, November 17, 1919.—Adv.

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Crane, this store, Fairmont sells Nerv-Worth. Neighboring agents: Johnson's Pharmacy, Shinnel; Honaker Pharmacy and Windsor Drug Co., Monongah; J. Yost, Fairview; W. P. Moore, Farmington; H. J. Matthews & Co., Mannington; Grant Graham, Belington; W. C. Davis, Phillips.—Adv.

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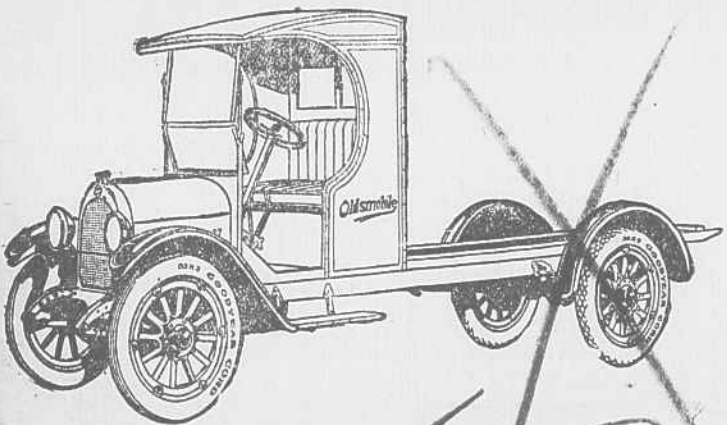
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